

V. REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Nakamura (U.S. Patent No. 6,468,162). Claims 7 and 9-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under USC 103 (a) as being unpatentable as obvious over Muroi (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0052238). The rejections are respectfully traversed.

In the present invention, the game machine advances the game based on the character data read from the trading cards, combines at least two sets of character data which are read from at least two trading cards in order to determine at least one set of character data when a predetermined condition is satisfied in the advanced game, determines at least one set of character data of a reward trading card based on the combined character data, and pays out the reward trading card which stores the determined set of character data. According to the game machine of the present invention, the reward trading card has relationship with the trading cards used for advancement of the game, so the player sufficiently has a sense of attachment to the reward trading card. In addition, according to the game machine, the process of paying out the reward trading card (acquiring the reward trading card) has game characteristic, so the interest of trading cards, which is to collect trading cards can be sufficiently reflected in the game.

When a player starts a game by two trading cards (two characters) and satisfies a predetermined condition in the game which is advanced based on the character, the player acquires another card (another character, which is the combined character of the two characters). The player has fun with the game which is advanced based on the trading cards, as well as the player's interest to collect trading cards is satisfied. In addition, the player sufficiently has a sense of attachment to the acquired trading card (reward trading card), since the reward trading card has relationship with the game which is advanced based on the trading

card firstly inserted by the player, as well as the reward trading card has relationship with the trading cards which is used at the beginning of the game.

On the other hand, Nakamura (U.S. Patent No. 6,468,162) discloses that the character information may be selected based on combination of character information already stored. The selected character has relationship with the already stored character, however, the gaming machine merely provides an accessory game which is played while waiting for the character data to download and write, but the gaming machine does not provide the game which advances based on the character firstly possessed by the player. The inherent interest of trading cards, which is to collect trading cards, has no connection to the game which is based on the firstly character; therefore, the interest to trading cards cannot be sufficiently reflected in the game.

Muroi (U.S. Patent Publication No. 200210052238) discloses that the character data is varied in accordance with the progression of the game. The character data is merely varied, but the newly character data (reward trading card), which is determined based on the combined character data of at least two character data, is not paid out. Therefore, player's interest to collect new trading cards is not satisfied.

Therefore, the present invention is not disclosed in Nakamura nor in Muroi. In addition, the present invention is not acquired by combination of Nakamura and Muroi, and the present invention has a synergistic effect results which is not acquired by the combination of Nakamura and Muroi.

In view of the above, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Newly-added claims 12-18 also include features not shown in the applied art. For support thereof, claim 12 is based on the description of Specification page 21, lines 19-26; claim 13 is based on the page 14, lines 12-16; claims 14-17 is based on the page 22, lines 1-9; and claim 18 is based on the page 7, lines 18-21.

Further, Applicants assert that there are also reasons other than those set forth above why the pending claims are patentable. Applicants hereby reserve the right to submit those other reasons and to argue for the patentability of claims not explicitly addressed herein in future papers.

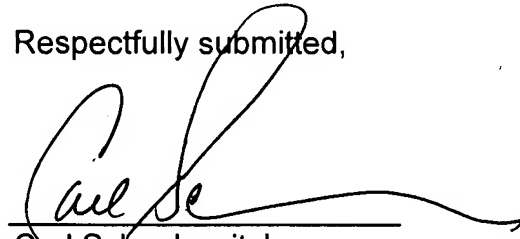
In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below.

Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper or if a Petition for Extension of Time is required for timely acceptance of the same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 18-0013 for any such fees and Applicant(s) hereby petition for such extension of time.

Respectfully submitted,

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